



## **Staff Report**

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### RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A BEAUTIFY BELMONT AWARDS PROGRAM

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

#### **Summary**

Approval of the attached resolution would establish a Beautify Belmont Award Program to recognize property owners who have enhanced the City's community by making significant exterior improvements to their individual properties.

#### **Background**

As part of the City's Vision Statement, City Council has determined that healthy and vibrant commercial districts and residential neighborhoods boost the economic health and quality of life in a community. Specifically, they create jobs, incubate small businesses, reduce sprawl, protect property values, and increase the community's options for goods and services. They are also a symbol of community pride and history.

When applied to the built environment of the City's community, revitalization can take a number of forms:

- Dramatic improvements to properties or structures that halt or reverse decline;
- Ongoing maintenance and/or refurbishment of structures and properties that prevents decline before it is allowed to begin;
- Total redevelopment of a property or structure—i.e. "tear-downs;" or
- Infill development—high quality new development in an older neighborhood or district.

A number of property owners in Belmont have recently made major exterior/façade improvements to their individual properties that have, in turn, had a positive impact on the surrounding area. Staff recommends recognizing these individuals through an awards program to encourage a high standard of quality properties and businesses in Belmont that are appealing to customers and visitors alike.

#### **Discussion**

The proposed Beautify Belmont Awards Program would recognize recipients with a reception and award presentation ceremony held in December of each year, presented and hosted by City Council.

### *Eligibility*

Both residential and non-residential projects would be eligible for consideration. In addition to infill and complete redevelopment projects, eligible improvements to existing properties include the enhancement, upgrading, reconstruction, or replacement of any or all of the following elements:

- Buildings and façades;
- Landscaping;
- Exterior lighting;
- Vehicular circulation; or
- Exterior signage.

### *Nominations Submission*

Staff proposes that nominations may be submitted by anyone, including the property owner, and may be submitted at any time throughout the year. The annual nomination deadline would be September 30th. Nominations received after that date would be held for future consideration.

Nominations would be required to include pertinent information for consideration, such as the property address, a brief description of the improvements that have been made, and any additional information, such as the property owner's name and contact information, nominee's contact information, and before and after photos (optional).

### *Judging Committee*

City staff would be responsible for collecting and compiling the award nominations throughout the year. Each October, nominations will be forwarded to a Judging Committee, comprised of the City Manager, Planning & Community Development Director and Finance Director. The Judging Committee would then convene to review the nominations and select which properties will be recognized.

### *Criteria for Evaluation*

The Beautify Belmont Award nominations would be evaluated primarily by assessing their impact on the surrounding area, or on the City as a whole, if appropriate. Criteria would be consistent with the City's Vision Statement and may include factors such as:

- Has the effort improved the built environment?
- Has the effort contributed to the stability or enhancement of an existing neighborhood or district?
- Does the effort set a desirable precedent for surrounding property owners?

The proposed program would require that projects receiving an award incorporate at least one of the following elements:

- building or façade improvements,
- landscaping or lighting enhancements,
- signage upgrades, and/or a consistently high level of general maintenance.

The following questions may assist in evaluating potential Belmont Beautiful Award nominees and help set a standard for the selection of the award recipient:

Impact

- Have the new improvements significantly improved the appearance of the site?
- Have the improvements had a positive impact on the surrounding area?
- Have the improvements contributed to the stability or enhancement of the surrounding area?
- Do the improvements set a desirable precedent for surrounding property owners?

Building/Façade

- Do new materials enhance the structure's visual image?
- Are new materials blended well with the materials previously used?
- If the structure has historical significance, has the facade been renovated to retain its original appearance?
- Does the project employ new construction technology, building materials or concepts?

Landscaping

- Does the landscaping complement the building (i.e. massing, color, texture and balance)?
- Are massed planting areas provided?
- Is the parking lot buffered from the public's view (does not apply to single-family residential properties)?
- Is seasonal color or other accent material provided?
- Does the site have a harmonious mix of trees, shrubs and ground covers?

Exterior Lighting (would not apply to single-family residential properties)

- Does the lighting enhance the character of the site (i.e. complement the building design)?
- Are the parking lot lights placed in landscaped islands?
- Has the glare on adjacent properties been kept to a minimum?
- Does the lighting provide a safe level of illumination for the parking lot and areas around the building?

Exterior Signage (would not apply to single-family residential properties)

- Is the signage an integral part of the building design and does it complement the building's architecture?
- Are the style, color and scale of the signage compatible with the site and building?
- Is the design of the signage consistent throughout the project?
- Is the signage legible?

Vehicular Circulation (does not apply to single-family residential properties)

- Does the internal traffic flow well?
- Is the parking easily accessible?
- Has the number of driveways been minimized?

- Have the turning radii been improved?

#### Maintenance

- Is plant material hardy?
- Are landscaped areas free from weeds and litter?
- Is turf mowed and manicured?
- Have painted surfaces been maintained?
- Have windows and other glass areas been maintained?
- Is the building clean in appearance and free from graffiti and other unnecessary markings?
- Are lights in working order?
- Are light standards and fixtures well maintained?
- Are sign surfaces well maintained?
- If sign is lighted, is lighting functional?
- Are driving surfaces well maintained?
- Have fire lanes and parking stall stripes been maintained?

#### *Recognition*

Awards should be exquisite, high-quality and designed to promote program exposure and enhance goodwill between the City, nominees, and the community. Examples include Council proclamations, flowers, crystal vases, silver engraved mementos, embossed leather goods, etc.

Awards will be presented annually at a meeting of the City Council during the Holiday period between Thanksgiving and New Year's, or at other times as may be deemed appropriate by the Judging Committee.

#### *Publicity*

Award recipients will be recognized with a press release. Press releases will be written to encourage future nominations.

#### *Coordination with Other Programs*

The City has established a façade improvement, multi-family and single family rehabilitation programs. The City's Community Development Department administers these programs and they may provide funding for residential and non-residential enhancements. Staff recommends that nominees contact the Belmont Redevelopment Agency regarding potential for these redevelopment incentives.

#### **General Plan/Vision Statement**

The Belmont Beautiful Award compliments the City's Vision Statement and economic development program, supporting a thriving culture and economy. This is not a grant or funding program; it recognizes individual efforts and seeks to encourage future individual reinvestment in our community.

**Fiscal Impact**

The success of the proposed Beautify Belmont Award Program is based on the premise of encouraging civic pride and recognizing individual efforts which represent the best of the community. In order to adequately fund the Belmont Beautiful Award Program, the City Council will establish an annual appropriation for this purpose.

Staff recommends an initial appropriation of \$1,500 to come from the City Council's budget account #101-4100-8599 – Miscellaneous.

**Public Contact**

Posting of City Council agenda.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that Council approve the attached resolution establishing a Beautify Belmont Awards Program.

**Alternatives**

1. Take no action.
2. With direction, refer matter back to staff.

**Attachments**

- A. Implementing Resolution

Respectfully submitted,

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Thomas Fil  
Finance Director

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Jack R. Crist  
City Manager

**Staff Contact:**

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[tfil@belmont.gov](mailto:tfil@belmont.gov)

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELMONT  
ESTABLISHING A BEAUTIFY BELMONT AWARDS PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, City Council has determined that healthy and vibrant commercial districts and neighborhoods boost the economic health and quality of life in a community and are a symbol of community pride and history, and;

**WHEREAS**, the City wishes to recognize, with an award, property owners who have endeavored to make significant exterior improvements to their individual properties that have, in turn, had a positive impact on the surrounding area, and;

**WHEREAS**, a Beautify Belmont Awards Program is consistent with the City's Vision Statement and Economic Development Program, and;

**WHEREAS**, a Beautify Belmont Awards Program would encourage civic pride and recognize individual efforts which represent the best of the community;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Belmont establishes a Beautify Belmont Award Program.

\* \* \* \* \*

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held on September 25, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

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MAYOR of the City of Belmont